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ABSTRACT

Some researchers have asserted that the poor outcomes from American Indian schools result from the lack of cultural fit between teachers and students. Data gathered from 258 American Indian faculty at U.S. colleges and tribal departments of education indicate that 65 institutions of higher education produced 1,347 new American Indian teachers during 1995-97, for an average of 449 per year, or about 2.3 percent of the demand. Seventy-five percent of these institutions were public colleges, one-sixth were private, five were tribal colleges, one was Bureau of Indian Affairs, and one was a tribe. In the 1,512 American Indian school districts, there were only 42 American Indian superintendents. To meet the unique cultural needs of American Indian students, it has been suggested that both American Indian control over school boards and Indian control of school administration are necessary. Recommendations to achieve this goal include increasing the number of American Indians earning teaching credentials to 2,000 or more per year for 15 years; developing a corps of American Indian superintendents; developing a superintendent's institute; developing a school board institute; and developing exemplary programs in American Indian schools. Two tables present production of Native American teachers by institution and total American Indian superintendents by state. (Contains 16 references.) (TD)

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INDIAN TEACHERS AND INDIAN CONTROL

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ED 444 782

BACKGROUND

Since the 1960's there has been a movement for Indian people to assume control of their education systems. Numerous researchers and advocates have asserted that "colonial education" systems which are external to Indian communities do not meet the cultural and psychological needs of their students (McKinley, Scheirbeck, etc.). Other researchers have asserted that the extremely poor outcomes from Indian schools are the result of the lack of cultural fit between the teachers and their students (Powless). Indian students, who are now making a rapid transition from Native languages to English only (Chavers, 1995), are learning little of their Native languages. But they are also learning too little English; vocabulary scores on standardized tests are very low (Chavers, 1990).

The parents and grandparents of today's Indian students often have bad attitudes toward "the white man's education." They were forced to attend BIA boarding schools, often off their reservation away from family, and frequently in another state. Education, with its semblance to military training, left a bitter taste in their mouths. So they are protective of their children, who now predominantly attend public schools on reservations. They complain if the teachers give their children homework. They almost never read to or with their children at home. They seldom visit the schools except as spectators at ball games.

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The result is a weakening of the school programs. Indian students read fewer than one book per year outside the classroom; students only attend school 70-80% of the time. They are seldom assigned homework by teachers, and when they are, they often ignore it. Teachers and parents seldom interact (Chavers, 1996a).

Very poor outcomes are achieved by Indian students. Fifty percent of Indian high school students drop out before graduation (Chavers, 1991). Eighty percent of Indian college students drop out before graduation (NASF, 1995). Standardized test scores for Indian students are the lowest of any ethnic group in the nation (Stearns, 1988). Only 17% of Indian high school graduates go on to college, compared to 62% for the nation as a whole (U. S. NCES, 1996).

The question of how administration of Indian schools can be transferred to the Indian community depends to a large extent on the quality and quantity of Indian teachers in the pipeline. The pipeline starts in high school and continues through college, through first employment, through earning of administrative credentials, through experience in a beginning administrative position, through experience as a building principal, and culminates for a few with experience as a top administrator, usually superintendent.

There are currently 1,260 public schools in the U. S. with high Indian enrollment (of at least 25%) (Pavel, 1997), 113 BIA schools which have almost 100% Indian enrollment, 70 Catholic Indian schools with almost 100% Indian enrollment, and 69 tribal contract schools with close to 100% Indian enrollment.

These 1,512 schools (we will call them "Indian schools") serve

some 200,500 Indian students from kindergarten to grade 12, or 44% of the total of 445,425 Indian students in the U. S. as of AY 1996. The other 56% (254,925 students) attend schools with low Indian enrollment of under 25% (Pavel, 1997).

Indian schools range in size from just over 100 students to over 13,000 in the largest system. Most of them are small, with BIA/tribal schools averaging just 241 students. Public Indian schools have an average enrollment of only 237 students (Pavel). At 16 teachers per school, these 1,512 schools have a total of some 24,192 teachers. When teachers at the public schools with low Indian enrollment are counted, many of which are reservation border towns, there are some 54,982 teachers interacting with Indian students in the U. S.

Teacher turnover is one of the major problems facing Indian schools. Unfortunately, a third% of the non-Indian teachers leave their jobs at Indian schools each year and have to be replaced (Chavers, 1987). This is a recurring nightmare for school boards and superintendents. They have to hire new non-Indian teachers each year to replace the ones who are leaving, and the ones they hire in many cases will stay only one year themselves
before they leave. Finding a non-Indian teacher who has spent an entire career in Indian schools is rare.

The non-Indians leave for a variety of reasons, mostly having to do with lack of services or with the fact that they can not build any equity in a house or buy a house on federal Indian land. They are not prepared to teach the culturally different; most new

hires at Indian schools are right out of college, where they had no courses on multicultural education, cultural anthropology, and sociology. They have no understanding of the cultural climate in which they work. They often live in compounds with little or no contact with the Native communities or parents. They never set foot in an Indian home, and some of them are actually afraid of these parents from having seen too many John Wayne movies.

In most Indian communities, there is no restaurant, no theater, no library, no hairdresser, no barber shop, no auto mechanic, no shopping center, no parks, and little recreation. Indian Country is bereft of services which people who live in cities take for granted. They often come to reservations with the idea that they will like living where they have to rough it. But after six months of living in a house trailer, having to cook all their own food, having to travel 30 miles on a dirt road and 50 miles on a paved road to get to town to shop for groceries, and having no city entertainment to occupy their spare time, most of them decide to go back to the cities where they can find all these things.

Many superintendents have concluded that this problem would be largely alleviated if they could hire enough Indian teachers. Indian teachers tend to stay at home once they earn their teaching credential, while the non-Indians tend to leave the reservations in less than three years of teaching. Indian teachers will feel at ease interacting with Indian parents.

This project researched (1) where Indian teachers are

currently being produced and the numbers being produced by schools of education in the U. S. and (2) how many Indians have made it through the ranks in the past 30 years to the top positions of superintendent, headmaster, and executive director.

THE STATUS OF INDIAN TEACHER PREPARATION

To gather data on the production of Indian teachers, we first built a data base of every professor of Indian education, school of education, tribal department with a credentialling program, and similar program in the nation. This data base was built by ordering college catalogs from some 500 colleges in the U. S. suspected of having an Indian program or an Indian faculty member. We then pulled the names of all faculty members from the catalog to build a computerized national data base on Access/Excel of all Indian college faculty. Tribal departments of education (TDOEs) were compiled from lists of tribal employees collected tribes.

We started with the best list we could put together, then proceeded to ask people on the list to give us names of other people with similar programs. The initial list had 258 potential faculty members and allied people on it. We estimate the data provided by the 65 responding institutions represents 90% or more of the total production of Indian teachers in the U. S. All respondents were schools of teacher education and tribes.

We asked people on the list to provide us with the number of Indian graduates they had had for the past three years. The letter to them was sent initially in the early Fall of 1997, and subse-

quently was mailed five more times to the people who had not responded. Almost half of the initial people on the list responded by saying that the question was not applicable to them. We removed them from the list, and 138 people left. Almost half these 138, or 65 institions of higher education (IHEs) and tribes, responded with data for the three years. Most of the rest did not provide data because they had produced no credentialed Indian teachers in the three years of 1995, 1996, and 1997. Nine institutions were left in the data base even though they had had no Indian graduates in the three years. They either had some graduates in the past, or had mainly a graduate program emphasis.

In a few cases more than one faculty member from an institution responded with the data. If they reported different totals, we took the higher total. There is also undoubtedly some "ethnic contamination" in the results, with non-Indians or persons with 1/128 Indian blood claiming to be Indians. The California and Oklahoma programs both reported that they count students who are less than one-quarter Indian in the totals, the federal Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) standard. So the total we found is too high by a factor of 25% or more.

The results are shown in Table 1. The totals for the three years were 392, 520, and 435, or an average of 449 total new Indian teachers per year. The grand total for the three years was ~~1,339~~ 1347.

Some 75% of the institutions responding were public colleges. One sixth were private (10 out of 63), five were tribal colleges, one was BIA, and one was a tribe (Oneida). (The totals for the

Navajo Nation, which is a cooperative project with five colleges, are reported through the college totals.) The five types are identified in Table 1 as 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5, respectively.

Only nine of the 65 had produced consistent double-digit numbers of graduates in the three-year period. Five of these nine are affiliated with the Navajo Nation's multi-year project to produce 1,000 new Indian teachers (Dine College, Northern Arizona University, Prescott College, Fort Lewis College, and the University of New Mexico at Gallup). Four others are state universities in states with large Indian populations (Oklahoma State University, Northeastern Oklahoma State University, Southeastern Oklahoma State University, and the University of North Carolina at Pembroke). One is a tribal college (Sinte Gleska University). These nine had produced a total of 852 of the 1,339 teachers in the three years, or 63.6% of the total.

The grand totals by type of institution are:

Public colleges (N = 46)	1,106	(82.1%)
Private colleges (N = 10)	119	(8.8%)
Tribal colleges (N = 7)	100	(7.4%)
BIA colleges (N = 1)	6	(0.4%)
Tribe (N = 1)	16	(1.2%)

The Navajo project started in 1992. A project of the tribal colleges to produce up to 375 new Indian teachers was announced in December, 1997, and is just starting. The teacher education project at Haskell Indian Nations University also started in the mid-1990's, and produced its first graduates in 1997.

Six of the tribal colleges produced 92 graduates, or 7.2% of the total. The only tribal teacher education program besides Navajo was at Oneida/Wisconsin; it produced a total of 16 graduates, or 1.2% of the total.

Thus the available supply of Indian teachers is only about 2.3% of the total demand each year. At this rate of replacement, there will always be a shortage of Indian teachers in the classroom. However, if this pipeline were to be increased to 2,000 a year and maintained for 10 years, the resulting 20,000 Indian teachers would have huge potential to improve Indian schools.

THE STATUS OF INDIAN SUPERINTENDENTS

One recent estimate of the percentage of Indian teachers in Indian schools is almost 10%. Pavel (1995) reports that 9.2% of teachers in BIA/tribal schools, 10.6% in public schools with high Indian enrollment, and 9.7% in public schools with low Indian enrollment are Indians. Other estimates put the number at 5% or lower.

In the majority of cases, Indian parents do not have a choice of sending their students to an all-Indian or predominantly-Indian school. This option has been taken away by the push by BIA to turn its responsibility for the education of Indians over to the states. For the 56% of Indian students in this situation, the likelihood of their ever having an Indian teacher is much less than the chances for students at predominantly-Indian schools.

To gather data on the status of Indian superintendents, we

contacted all 50 State Departments of Education to get actual names of Indians who are superintendents in public, BIA, tribal, and contract schools. We contacted the Association of Tribal Contract Schools (ACTS), the organization which represents the tribal schools, to get the names of the Indian superintendents of these schools. We contacted the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions to get the actual names of Indians who are superintendents of these schools. We contacted the National Association of Federally Impacted Schools (NAFIS) to get the names of Indian superintendents in these schools.

In the State of New Mexico, with 22 Super A Impact Aid districts, there are currently 11 Indian superintendents. In the State of Arizona, with 40 Super A districts, there are only seven Indian superintendents. In Washington, with 30 Super A districts, there are five Indian superintendents. In Nevada, with 11 Super A districts, there are no Indian superintendents. In Montana, with 45 Super A districts, there are no Native superintendents.

These five states have a total of 148 Super A (largely Indian) school districts, but only 11 Indian superintendents. Thus only seven percent of the predominantly-Indian schools in these states have Indian superintendents. This is an improvement over 30 years ago, when the rate was near zero, but it is also an indication that there is still a huge gap between the number of Indian superintendents and the number needed for parity.

Our data show that the chance an Indian student will ever have an Indian superintendent is quite a bit less than the chance the

student will have an Indian teacher. Out of the 1,512 Indian school districts, there are only 42 school superintendents, or 2.7% of the total. Thus Indians are only represented 35% as well at the level of superintendent as they are at the level of classroom teacher, where parity figures are below 10%. The main reason for the larger gap for Indian superintendents than for Indian teachers is the newness of the Indian teacher corps; most Indian teachers now in the schools have earned credentials only within the past 15 years.

The numbers of superintendents per state are shown in Table 2.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To meet the unique cultural needs of Indian students, it has been suggested that Indian control over school boards as well as Indian control of school administration is necessary. Indian control will supposedly occur when Indians are on boards of control and when Indians are represented in the administrative ranks, especially in the top rank of superintendent.

There is an urgent need to improve Indian schools. We estimate that fewer than 20 of the 740 high schools on or near reservations have a full college prep track. Fewer than half of Indian high schools are accredited by both state and regional accrediting agencies. Indian high school graduates are leaving with cheapened diplomas.

Whether the leader of a school district is Indian or not, the important function of the school must be acknowledged. It is a bridge from the Native culture of its students to the dominant

culture. The successful school leader will be one who understands and respects both the Native culture and the European culture of the U. S. Such leaders must be grounded in Indian history, language and culture. They must understand the concept of "culture" from anthropology and sociology--not culture as sustenance, but as the way of life, the rules of life.

They must understand the life cycles of Indian people who live on reservations most or all their lives, and who live off the reservations for periods of time. They must understand the concepts of biculturalism and bilingualism. They must understand the importance of language in life.

Given that only a small minority of school superintendents on reservations are Indians, efforts need to be made by tribes, colleges, nonprofits, and schools to improve this situation. We offer the following recommendations:

1. An increase in the number of Indians earning teaching credentials. The current annual total of 449 new Indian teachers needs to be increased to 2,000 or more and maintained for a period of a decade and a half. These teachers need to be top of the line, outstanding individuals, who will make a career out of teaching. They need to be started in high school. Too often, today's Indian teacher is someone who stumbled into teaching, without having it as a career goal as a youngster. They are often not well prepared. Tribes, state government, the federal government, private foundations, corporations, and nonprofits all have a stake in this problem. They all need to commit resources to it.

2. The development of a Superintendent Corps. These programs would be aimed at increasing the number of Indians in leadership roles in schools. More of the current crop of teachers could be positioned by additional education to start moving up the career ladder as vice principals, principals, associate superintendents, and superintendents. They could earn credits onsite during the year, in summer school, and on sabbaticals taken for a year. Schools need to make a commitment to this development, but the emphasis needs to come from a national perspective.

3. The development of a Superintendent's Institute. This Institute would be professional development for persons being hired as superintendents of Indian schools for the first time, or for those who had been on the job for a few years. It would run for two weeks in July or August. It would emphasize the strengths of the Native languages, how to integrate Native concepts into the curriculum, Native concepts of science and art, and intensive Indian history. The main thrust of the Institute would be to reduce the very high turnover rate among superintendents in Indian schools. We have only anecdotal data on the turnover rate of superintendents of Indian schools, but these data indicate a turnover rate somewhere between 35% and 50% per year.

4. The development of a School Board Institute. This Institute would be held for one week in the Fall of the year, in advance of the time when superintendents, principals, and teachers are hired. It would orient school board members to the problems of Indian schools and how to address them. It would emphasize

planning, goal setting, and problem solving techniques.

5. The development of Exemplary programs in Indian schools. This movement, which has appeared only since 1990, has the most promise to upgrade and improve Indian schools. There are now 16 Exemplary Programs in Indian Education (EPIEs) in the schools; they are described in Chavers (1996b). One of them, for instance, Wellpinit High School, now sends over 90% of its high school graduates on to college, has reduced its dropout rate from 60% to below 1%, and has raised its test scores from below the twentieth percentile to above the fiftieth percentile. All this improvement in the Wellpinit Schools has occurred since 1989. We need to have 50 of these projects in place in the next five years.

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TABLE 1: NATIONAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Production of Native American Teachers

NAME OF INSTITUTION (N = 65)	1995*	1996*	1997*
ALASKA			
Alaska Pacific University (2)#	1	3	3
University of Alaska, Fairbanks (1)	-0-	-0-	1
	1	3	4
ARIZONA			
Central Arizona College (1)	-0-	-0-	-0-
Dine College (3)	-0-	-0-	8
Northern Arizona University (1)	35	72	62
Phoenix College (1)	9	8	11
Prescott College (2)	29	33	23
University of Arizona (1)	17	8	7
	90	121	111
ARKANSAS			
University of the Ozarks (1)	-0-	-0-	-0-
	-0-	-0-	-0-
CALIFORNIA			
Calif. State Univ., Bakersfield (1)	-0-	16	9
Calif. State Univ., Fullerton (1)	-0-	-0-	-0-
Calif. State Univ., Long Beach (1)	-0-	-0-	2
Calif. State Univ., Northridge (1)	1	-0-	-0-
Calif. State Univ., San Bernardino (1)	2	2	3
Humboldt State University (1)	2	2	2
Sacramento City College (1)	2	-0-	-0-
San Francisco State University (1)	4	3	3
Stanford University (2)	4	-0-	1
Univ. of California at Berkeley (1)	1	-0-	-0-
Univ. of Calif. at Santa Barbara (1)	4	1	-0-
	20	24	20
COLORADO			
Fort Lewis College (1)	32	28	22
	32	28	22

* Undergraduate only; MA, MAT, M. Ed., Ed. D., and Ph. D. not included.

\# Codes indicate type of institution: (1) = public college or university, (2) = private college or university, (3) = tribal college, (4) = BIA college, (5) = tribe.

NAME OF INSTITUTION	1995	1996	1997
KANSAS			
Haskell Indian Nations University (4)	-0-	-0-	6
University of Kansas (1)	-0-	-0-	-0-
	-0-	-0-	6
MASSACHUSSETTS			
Harvard University (2)	-0-	-0-	-0-
Philips Academy (2)	5	5	4
	5	5	4
MICHIGAN			
Michigan Tech University (1)	1	-0-	-0-
	1	-0-	-0-
MINNESOTA			
Carleton College (2)	-0-	-0-	-0-
Bemidji State University (1)	7	8	-0-
University of Minnesota (1)	6	1	3
	13	9	3
MISSOURI			
University of Missouri (1)	-0-	-0-	-0-
	-0-	-0-	-0-
MONTANA			
Eastern Montana College (1)	6	8	8
Montana State University (1)	3	12	9
Northern Montana College (1)	5	5	7
Stone Child College (3)	2	2	7
University of Montana (1)	15	5	2
	31	32	33
NEW MEXICO			
College of Santa Fe (2)	-0-	2	1
New Mexico Highlands University (1)	2	-0-	4
University of New Mexico, Gallup (1)	14	18	25
	16	20	30
NEW YORK			
Cornell University (2)	1	-0-	-0-
St. Lawrence College (2)	-0-	-0-	-0-
State University at Fredonia (1)	1	3	1
	2	3	1

NAME OF INSTITUTION	1995	1996	1997
NORTH CAROLINA			
University of N. C. at Pembroke (1)	23	21	14
	23	21	14
NORTH DAKOTA			
Minot State University (1)	8	8	7
Turtle Mountain Community College (3)	5	5	7
University of North Dakota (1)	9	21	11
	22	34	25
OHIO			
Miami University (1)	1	2	2
	1	2	2
OKLAHOMA			
Northeastern OK State Univ. (1)	38	121	73
Oklahoma State University (1)	24	21	19
Southeastern Oklahoma State Univ. (1)	27	25	23
University of Oklahoma (1)	20	-0-	-0-
	99	167	115
PENNSYLVANIA			
Slippery Rock University (1)	-0-	-0-	1
	-0-	-0-	1
SOUTH DAKOTA			
Oglala Lakota College (3)	12	7	9
Sinte Gleska University (3)	10	10	10
University of South Dakota (1)	4	1	1
	26	18	20
UTAH			
University of Utah (1)	2	6	2
	2	6	2
WASHINGTON			
Antioch University (2)	-0-	-0-	4
Evergreen State College (1)	-0-	3	-0-
Heritage College (3)	2	1	3
Northwestern Indian College (3)	-0-	-0-	-0-
Washington State University (1)	1	-0-	1
Western Washington University (1)	-0-	13	4
	3	17	12

NAME OF INSTITUTION	1995	1996	1997
	WISCONSIN		
Oneida Cultural Heritage Prog. (5)	2	6	8
University of Wisc., Eau Claire (1)	-0-	-0-	-0-
University of Wisconsin, Madison (1)	3	4	2
Univ.of Wisconsin, Milwaukee (1)	-0-	-0-	-0-
	5	10	10
ANNUAL TOTALS FOR THE U. S.	392	520	435
GRAND TOTAL		1,347	
THREE-YEAR AVERAGE =		449	

TABLE 2

TOTAL INDIAN SUPERINTENDENTS BY STATE

Arizona	7
California	1
Florida	2
Idaho	2
Maine	4
Montana	2
Nebraska	1
New Mexico	11
North Dakota	1
South Dakota	3
Utah	1
Washington	5
Wyoming	2
TOTAL	42